(b) what are the details of agreement reached with the GATT authorities?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Discussions held amongst participation countries in Geneva in December 1992 were in the form of exchanges of views and did not get to the stage of formal agreements. India sought changes, improvements and understandings on, *inter-alia*, the following:

(i) In *Textiles* on the backloading of the draft agreement.

(ii) In *TRIPs* on compulsory licensing, importation as working, clean transition period patenting of genetic material and sui generis system of protection for plant varieties;

(iii) In *Agriculture* on food stocking, public distribution and minimum market access; and

(iv) In *Services* on movement of skilled and professional personnel.

World Bank suggestions on export of foodgrains

2374. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA:

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL:

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank and Government have suggested export of foodgnains from the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Food Ministry is opposed to this suggestion;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what is the final decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE I THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUI PLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AN PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH AI DITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MIN ISTER OF STATE IN THE MINIS TRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAM ALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Goverr ment is not aware of any such su gestions.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) Does not arise. It is the poli of the Government to promote e ports of agricultural commodities such a manner that the domestic a ailability of items of mass consum tion is not affected. Hence, all agr cultural commodities may be expor ed without any restrictions, except the extent that such exports a regulated by the negative list of e ports or any other provision of t extent EXIM policy or any other la for the time being in force.

Proposal to bring bidi tobacco und the purview of tobacco board

2375. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHAND RAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of COMMERC be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any propos under Government's consideration bring bidi Tobacco under the pu view of the Tobacco Board on t same lines as Virgina Tobacco;

(b) if so, whether under the co templated scheme, bidi grade tobac growers will be required to get ther selves registered with the Board a will have to sell their product on to the Board and the bidi produce

including small manufacturers, will have to purchase their requirement of tobacco only from the Board;

(c) whether under the scheme the interests of the small tobacco growers and those of small bidi manufacturers would be protected; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (d) The question of bringing non-virginia tobacco under the purview of the Tobacco Board is under consideration of Government.

Decline in Engineering Export

2376. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that engineering exports registered a steep decline during September to December 1992 if so, how these exports compared month to month with those during the preceding three months and the corresponding months in the previous year in dollar terms and otherwise; and

(b) what are the details of steps taken/being taken to boost up the exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) There has been no decline in rupee or dollar terms in exports of engineering goods during September—November, 1992 as compared to exports in September—November, 1991 or June—August, 1992 as may be seen from the enclosed statement (*See* below). Export figures for the month of December, 1992 are not yet available from Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics.

(b) Promotion of exports has been the constant endeavour of the Government. Extreme Focus on export sectors having high growth potential, facility of conversion of entire export earnings at market rate of exchange, provision of inputs for export production at international prices and exemption of income from exports from income-tax are some of the important constituents of Government's strategy to step up exports.

Statement

Year Month	1992		1991		Month	1992	
	Value of Exports in million US Dollars	Value of Exports in Rs. Crores.	Value of Exports in million US Dollars	Value of Exports in Rs. Crores		Value of Exports in million US Dollars	Value of Exports in million Crores.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
September	190	539	159	413	June	178	507
October	180	510	138	356	July	156	443
November	190	540	124	322	August	180	511